



4-H Youth Development

2000 Programs of Excellence

Life Skills

Plants and Animals

Premier Exhibitor Recognition Program

Tennessee

Situation

In the early 1990's, livestock show projects were criticized because of a small group that abused animals, used illegal drugs and did not follow ownership rules. Also during this time period, there were large prices being paid for show animals and many thought that large prices encouraged parents, leaders and youth to cheat. Consequently, Extension Youth Development wanted to design a recognition program that would reward youth that have excelled in the project rather than honoring an excellent show animal.

Program Description

Objective of the Premier Exhibitor Recognition Program is to provide youth the opportunity to demonstrate the skills and knowledge gained by participating in youth livestock projects. The Premier Exhibitor Recognition Program increases the emphasis on livestock knowledge and skills, problem solving and communication with adults. This program complements the wholesome competition, social development and fun learning traditionally associated with junior livestock shows. Premier Exhibitor Recognition Program was initiated in 1996 with the Tennessee state Swine Show and the Tennessee Junior Sheep Exposition. Currently, four state shows have Premier Exhibitor Recognition Programs. For larger state shows, Premier Exhibitors are recognized for the following age groups: Explorer (grade 4), Junior (grades 5 and 6), Junior High (grades 7 and 8), Senior Level I (grades 9 and 10) and Senior Level II (grades 11 and 12). For smaller shows, Premier Exhibitor Recognition is for the Junior, Junior High and Senior groups. Premier Exhibitors are named for market steer, breeding heifer, market lamb, breeding ewe and commercial ewe.

Premier Exhibitors are determined by a combined score from showmanship (conducted by grade groups), skillathon and live animal placing. Each activity has value of 100 points.

Showmanship scores are 70 points for a white award, 80 points for a red award and 90 points for a blue award. The "top ten" in showmanship earned 91-100 points. The skillathon consists of five stations (20 points each) with varying topics that includes breed identification, meat identification, animal product evaluation, equipment identification and uses, feeds and feeding, quality management and livestock terminology. The highest skillathon score is awarded 100 points and second high receives 99 and etc. Animal scores are derived from the animal placing in class. However in the breeding ewe show, Junior High and Senior Levels I present a pair of ewes for evaluation and Senior Level II presents three ewes for scoring. Class winners receive 100 points and subsequent placings are worth two points less.

Stakeholder Satisfaction

Response to the Premier Exhibitor Recognition Program has been good from both youth and adults. An increase in participation has occurred the last four years. In 1997, 316 youth participated in Premier Exhibitor Recognition Programs whereas in 2000 there were 577 participants. This is an increase of 82 percent. A strong feature of the program is that it is age based for the skillathon and showmanship components. In the skillathon, learning stations are targeted for the appropriate project educational experiences. Also, the interaction of the youth and adult facilitator enhances the communication skills of the youth. One of the livestock shows that is conducted by both Tennessee and Virginia, has incorporated the skillathon.

Accomplishments and Impacts

Increased knowledge has been the major impact. Youth better utilize educational materials and project manuals in preparation for the skillathon. It is a real joy to go through the barn and see a group of 4-Her's preparing for the skillathon. A comparison of the first two years of the sheep skillathon showed an increase in scores, especially with the younger age groups. One youth remarked, that he felt that he knew more when he left the skillathon than when entered. One skillathon station facilitator who is a schoolteacher, stated that he was going to use the skillathon format in his classroom. Currently, several project groups use the skillathon concept as part of their project activities.

Resource Commitment

Approximately \$10,500 is needed each year to provide the awards for the Premier Exhibitor Recognition Programs. At the Tennessee Junior Beef Exposition, the Senior Level I receives

a \$500 scholarship and the Senior Level II receives a \$1000 scholarship for both the market steer and breeding heifer divisions. Likewise at Tennessee Junior Sheep Exposition, the Senior Level I receives a \$500 scholarship and the Senior Level II receives a \$1000 scholarship for the market lamb, breeding ewe and commercial ewe divisions. This has encouraged some youth to attend post secondary training. These financial commitments have come from various private donors.

Collaborators

In addition to the above sponsors, approximately 75 volunteers are used as skillathon station facilitators.

Contact Person(s)

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Other Base Program Areas This Program Applies To

Agriculture

4-H/Youth Development

Youth Pork Quality Assurance Training

Nebraska

Program Description

Program materials were combined into a kit which included a reference manual of technical knowledge, teaching methods, posters, and items such as stuffed pigs for use in practicing quality assurance procedures. Over a 5 month period, state and county staff trained approximately 3500 youth in Pork Quality Assurance (PQA).

The program was implemented to place more emphasis on: 1) "Farm to table" food safety education; 2) Management and production skills, 3) Role of consumer in the livestock industry, and 4) Ethical decision-making skills. The program was designed for the learning characteristics of 9 to 11 year olds.

Youth attended a two-hour training session and will continue to update their knowledge by attending similar sessions at least once every two years. Sessions included many hands-on activities and interactive discussions where the younger and older youth worked together.

Accomplishments and Impacts

Pre- and post-tests were completed by youth to evaluate both their attitudes toward quality assurance and to evaluate their

knowledge of quality assurance practices. Significant changes in attitudes and knowledge were seen. Select results of post-tests were as follows:

- Ninety-seven percent strongly agreed that "Consumers have a right to expect a safe and wholesome food supply;"
- Ninety-fivepercent strongly agreed with the statement "It is the responsibility of every hog producer and exhibitor to produce a safe and wholesome pork product;"
- Eighty percent (an increase of 29%) strongly agreed it is irresponsible to forget to record a drug injection;
- Sixty-four percent (an increase of 27%) strongly disagreed with the statement "Most consumers don't care about how pigs are treated and handled;"
- There was a thirty-two percent reduction in those who thought the ham was an acceptable injection site;
- There was a forty-nine percent increase in those who knew withdrawal times should be included in records;
- There was an eighteen percent increase in those who identified the appropriate size of needle to use;

Collaborators

Cooperative Extension, veterinarians, Nebraska and local Pork Producers Associations.

Contact Person(s)

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4-H Veterinary Science Program

Pennsylvania

Program Description

If you were to ask a class of 6th-8th graders what they wanted to be when they grew up, a majority of them would say veterinarians. What better way to introduce them to this career than through the 4-H Veterinary Science project?

Each year in Bucks County, nine local veterinarians donate at least 50 hours of teaching time in the field of veterinary science to approximately 100 youth. Since Bucks County is fairly large, we offer classes at 6-7 different locations throughout the county. Each class meets once a week for 6 weeks. Participants are 12-18 years old and can become 4-H members through this course. The program is advertised through local newspapers, and the response is overwhelming.

While working through 4-H project books, the members take

pulses, heart rates, and temperatures while doing a complete check-up on many different animals. Each week participants are encouraged to bring in their own pets for "check-ups". The youth role-play veterinarian and owner to learn about the questions they need to ask to correctly diagnose an illness. The youth also use microscopes to check tissue samples and some even dissect organs to learn about the systems of the animal body. Members in Veterinary Science - Level 3 work one-on-one with a vet to discuss, choose, and research a topic of interest. Then they write a paper and make a presentation to the class.

Each vet also takes their class on a field trip. Past tours have included "behind the scenes" at local veterinary hospitals and Delaware Valley College's farms.

Each volunteer veterinarian brings with them a wealth of knowledge and school/career experiences that fascinates the participants. All of these aspiring vets have lots of questions about high school and college and what they need to do to become a veterinarian.

Stakeholder Satisfaction

Having a charismatic, energetic, interactive veterinarian is the most important key to success. While the 4-H agent must organize class times and schedule meeting rooms and prepare the pre/post-test, it all boils down to how the speaker relates to the children. Many of the vets have encouraged their colleagues to help teach one or two of the sessions, so that the youth hear from different speakers. Some also ask outside professionals to come and talk about their careers in the animal industry (like a kennel owner or riding instructor or reptile enthusiast).

Accomplishments and Impacts

Participants are asked to complete a pre- and post-test. Questions are knowledge and skill based and taken from material in the 4-H project books. All of the participants increase their knowledge and also their comfort level in performing tasks such as taking an animal's temperature.

One of the most important impacts on the youth is their interaction with the veterinarians. They can ask and answer as many questions as they'd like about all the different careers in veterinary medicine. This starts them thinking about school/college and internships to help them prepare.

Collaborators

Each year the Extension agent collaborates with 8-9 different veterinarians to teach the classes. Delaware Valley College has provided some excellent instructors as well as tours of

their facilities. Extension also works with schools, libraries, townships, and parks to schedule meeting places.

Contact Person(s)

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Livestock Judges and Show Manager School Improves the Skills of Participants

Idaho

Situation

Youth livestock shows can be an effective teaching tool for youth development as well as for agriculturists of the future. However, if these programs focus on exhibition of the visually most perfect animal on the final day of the project, unethical fitting and showing practices can become pervasive.

Educational methods employed by FFA and 4-H can either be responsive to future needs and technological advancements or risk becoming obsolete.

Program Description

There were a total of 108 participants, representing seven states and one Canadian province, in attendance at the 2000 Pacific Northwest Livestock Judges and Show Management School. The training was a cooperative effort of the University of Idaho, Washington State University, and Oregon State University. Eighty participants were involved in the judge's track and 28 in the show management track.

These 108 participants influence an estimated 50,000 individuals through youth livestock programs each year through their roles as livestock judges, show managers, and Extension/Vocational Agricultural Educators. The primary goal of the training was to ensure that these critical "point people" for agriculture are knowledgeable about issues such as food animal quality assurance and forward-thinking methods of animal evaluation that support the mission of youth development.

Quality assurance education was integrated into this training to promote practice changes in youth with livestock projects and inform volunteer leaders, parents and project supervisors about components and foundation concepts of quality assurance and animal care. Management practices that can influence meat safety, such as chemical residue prevention, proper injection

techniques, and feeding and sanitation practices were also a part of the training.

Accomplishments and Impacts

One of the goals of the training was to impart information regarding the importance of quality assurance and residue avoidance in food animals that are marketed through the food chain. The preliminary evaluation indicates that 75 percent of the participants demonstrated an increased knowledge level regarding the issue of food animal quality assurance related to youth livestock project animals.

The measurement of attitudes regarding use of ultrasound technology demonstrates that participants were more receptive to the technology as a result of this training. Specific findings include:

- Thirty-four percent of the participants shifted from a negative attitude about the use of ultrasound in livestock evaluation to a positive attitude.
- Forty-five percent of the participants came to the training with a positive attitude toward ultrasound and maintained or increased that positive attitude.
- Seventy-nine percent of participants had a positive attitude toward the reliability of ultrasound technology at the conclusion of the training.
- Sixty-six percent had a more favorable attitude toward the reliability of ultrasound technology as a result of the training.
- Twenty percent of the participants left the training with a negative attitude about the use of ultrasound. Half of these participant's attitudes remained unchanged as a result of the training and half showed an improved attitude while remaining on the negative side of the scale.

Other general measures of success of the training include:

- Ninety-seven percent of the attendees demonstrated an increased understanding of the Systems Approach of Livestock Evaluation.
- One hundred percent of the show managers and 100% of the livestock judges stated that they were better qualified to do their jobs as a result of the training.

Contact Person(s)

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Earth Gardens
Colorado

Situation

School-aged children in grades K-6 classes need more opportunities to learn about the world of gardening. Many children no longer have the opportunity to have a home garden. Earth Gardens provides hands-on experiential lessons in a school setting. The vision of Earth Gardens is that every individual will have the opportunity to be enriched by gardening experiences. We know that gardening provides a great educational vehicle, but it also requires more than just a curriculum to be successful. Earth Gardens provides that bridge. The mission of Earth Gardens is to enrich youth in school by developing an awareness of our renewable and sustainable habitats with hands-on experiences through gardening. Important concepts that need to be taught today are stewardship of the land, and reduce/reuse/recycle principles.

Program Description

Earth Gardens is a program available to Adams and Boulder County schools. The program reaches primarily suburban and urban school children, K-6th grades. It is a collaborative program created by a consortium of educational groups headed by Colorado State University (CSU) Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development Programs in Boulder and Adams Counties and the Colorado Greenhouse Growers Association. The program is multi-faceted allowing participation at a level that best fits each school. Some schools only use the curriculum, but others take full advantage of CSU Master Gardeners, free seeds and bedding plants for school landscaping. For school year 2000 – 2001, curriculum materials have been marked with SCANS competency icons to relate activities to workforce preparation.

Stakeholder Satisfaction

The FTEs committed to this project are 0.15 in Adams County (Tom Fey) and 0.15 in Boulder County (Deryl Waldren). Schools are able to participate on a year-round basis, although most participate from March through June annually. Seed packets are distributed mostly March - June and the bedding plants for school landscaping are distributed to schools in early May. The curriculum provides a basis for successfully planting seeds and bedding plants.

There are 42 classroom lessons for indoor and outdoor settings. The strength of Earth Gardens is in that K-6, school classrooms can participate at whatever level they are most comfortable with. The program hopes, at the very least, that classroom lessons are taught. Key points of the program involve free seed packets and bedding plants to landscape schools. Seed packets can also be used to plant vegetable gardens, herbs, and flowers on the school grounds. In addition, CSU Master Gardeners are matched up with

classrooms/teachers who need additional assistance with horticultural subject matter.

Accomplishments and Impacts

During the 1998-99 school year, Adams County served 2,412 youth in 15 schools; Boulder County 2,238 youth in 13 schools. More than 200 individual packets of seeds were distributed to schools during the 1999-2000 school year. One hundred twenty flats of bedding plants were distributed to schools for landscaping during 1999-2000. Five CSU Master Gardeners were matched with school classroom seeking additional horticulture subject matter expertise. Mr. Hannapel's 6th Grade Woodchuck Team from Sunset Middle School in Longmont, Colorado, had these comments about the program, "Your generosity, advice, knowledge, and material contributions, along with a lot of hard work from students, came together to make our Colorado Garden a success! The Colorado Garden is open to the community year round. We would like to extend a special welcome to all those who supported the development of a wonderful garden for our school and community."

Resource Commitment

Twenty-five thousand dollars of bedding plants was donated by Valley High School in Gilcrest, Colorado; Career Enrichment Park, Westminster, Colorado; and Boulder Valley Vocational Technical School, Boulder, Colorado. An additional \$7,000 of starter seeds were donated by Goldsmiths Seeds of Gilroy, California. These plants and seeds were donated to participating schools. In addition, \$8,000 of individual seed packets, growing medium, tray and pots were donated by Sun Grow Horticulture of Utah; TLC Polyform in Plymouth, Minnesota; and Botanical Interests, Broomfield, Colorado. The Colorado Greenhouse Growers Association donated the truck to deliver the plants for schools to pick up.

Collaborators

Colorado State University Master Gardeners; Colorado Greenhouse Growers Association, Westminster, Colorado; Valley High School in Gilcrest, Colorado; Career Enrichment Park, Westminster, Colorado; Boulder Valley Vocational Technical School, Boulder, Colorado; Goldsmiths Seeds of Gilroy, California; Sun Grow Horticulture of Utah; TLC Polyform in Plymouth, Minnesota; and Botanical Interests, Broomfield, Colorado.

Contact Person(s)

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Other Base Program Areas This Program Applies To
Natural Resources Environmental Management; Community
Resource & Economic Development; Agriculture; Leadership &
Volunteer Development; and 4-H/Youth Development
